



OUR MEDICAL LIBERTIES:

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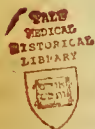
PERSONAL RIGHTS OF THE SUBJECT,

AS INFRINGED

BY RECENT AND PROPOSED LEGISLATION;

COMPRISING

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMPULSORY VACCINATION ACT,
THE MEDICAL REGISTRATION AND REFORM BILLS,
AND THE MAINE LAW.



BY JOHN GIBBS, Esq.

“Timeo danaos et dona ferentes.”—VIRG. *ÆNEID*. lib. ii. v. 49.

——— “As the noble Athenian inscription told Demetrius, that he was in so much a god, as he acknowledged himself to be a man; so we may say of physicians, that they are the greater, in so much as they know and confess the weakness of their art.”—SIR WM. TEMPLE. *Works*, vol. iii. p. 285.

“Dost thou think because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?”

“Yes, by Saint Anne; and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too.”—*Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 3.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL WALDEGRAVE.

MY LORD,

COMMON sense and unadorned truth, unless proclaimed with the voice of recognised authority, ever find it difficult to obtain a hearing in the busy turmoil and noisy conflict of party and faction.

The difficulty is not a little enhanced, when the din of war resounds and the imaginations of men are fired and their expectations agitated by alternate hopes and fears and by the hourly apprehension of portentous events, in which are involved the fate of nations.

At such a time, how hardly shall the appeal of humanity arrest attention, and the demands of justice secure a triumph!

Therefore it is, my Lord, that I avail myself, with thankful eagerness, of the permission so kindly granted to refer to your Lordship's judgment the important questions which I but too inadequately endeavour to elucidate in these pages—assured that I shall be favoured with a patient and impartial hearing by, at least, one man, who will not shun the trouble of investigation—will not shut his ears to the pleadings of truth—will not harden his heart to the sacred claims of justice and humanity.

Permit me to seize this occasion to avow how highly I esteem the honour of subscribing myself,

Your Lordship's
Obliged and obedient servant
And faithful friend,

JOHN GIBBS.

Maze Hill Cottage, St. Leonards-on-Sea,
April 22nd, 1854.

OUR MEDICAL LIBERTIES.

LAST Session, a measure, robbing the subject of some of his dearest personal rights and liberties, was indecently hurried through Parliament. Almost at the close of the session, it attracted my attention, and I hastily and vainly raised a warning voice against it. I ventured to predict that, if it should become law, it would be followed up, this session, by other attacks upon the liberty of the subject, I ventured even to indicate the nature of those attacks, and my predictions have been verified to the letter.

The Act of last session crept through Parliament, under the modest and unassuming title of the *Vaccination Extension Bill*; in reality, it was a Bill of pains and penalties.

The measure now before Parliament bears the equally modest and unassuming title of the *Medical Registration Bill*; it, likewise, is an encroachment upon the liberties of the subject, and a Bill of pains and penalties; it is, moreover, a violation of the principles of free trade, and proposes to create an odious monopoly for the benefit of a trading class. It is to be followed by another measure of similar character, but of wider scope, entitled the *Medical Reform Bill*.

The crowning measure with which we are threatened is the *Maine Liquor Law*.

Thus it is sought to steal away our medical liberties, one by one, on the principle upon which the horse's tail was denuded of hair, and so to render us—the intelligent people of this free realm—abject slaves to the medical profession.

It is my purpose to offer in turn, some remarks upon each of the above-named measures, in which are involved matters of vital importance, to every human being in these kingdoms, and to blend these remarks with such general observations, as shall be suggested by a consideration of the whole subject of legislative aggression upon our medical liberties.

The *Vaccination Extension Act* ; or, rather, the Compulsory Vaccination Act, has the first claim to our attention. It is the *first direct aggression upon the person of the subject in medical matters*, which has been attempted in these kingdoms. By it the medical profession, after long agitation, have got in the thin edge of the wedge, and they exultingly look forward to, and, if not checked by a timely and energetic opposition, will indubitably succeed in establishing a tyranny as odious, galling, insulting and injurious, as any against which Britons ever successfully struggled.

At a recent meeting of the *South London Medical Association*, Dr. Brady, M. P., the author of the Medical Registration Bill, exclaimed, with incautious and indecent exultation, "*In the last year, by passing the Compulsory Vaccination Bill, they had taken away the liberty of the subject !*" In the *Lancet*, of February 25th, 1854, a Dr. Ebsworth frantically yells the war-cry of the profession :— "We must shout for Let us not flag, till we have obtained a recognition of our deserts. *The public were made for us, not we for the public !*"

"While man exclaims, see all things for my use,
See man for mine, exclaims a pamper'd goose !"

By-and-by, we shall see what Drs. Brady and Ebsworth, *arcades ambo*, consider to be the "deserts" of the profession of which they are the champions ; we shall also see in what these deserts really consist.

If I am only favoured with attention, I have that reliance

upon the good sense of the British people that I hope to awaken them to a recognition of the evils which immediately threaten them, and I trust that, even with the clang of arms in their ears, they are not so “frighted from their propriety” as to be deaf to the voice of reason, and that, while sustaining justice, freedom, and the national dignity and interests abroad, they are not insensible to the dictates of justice, freedom, and the national dignity and interests at home.

The Compulsory Vaccination Act, while dishonouring science, invades in the most odious, tyrannical, and, speaking as a Briton, unexampled manner the liberty of the subject, and the sanctity of home; unspeakably degrades the free-born Briton not only in depriving him of liberty of choice in a personal matter, but even in denying him the possession of reason; outrages some of the finest feelings and best affections of the human heart;—those feelings and affections which have their origin in parental love—that still bright spark of the Divine Nature breathed into man by his Heavenly Father;—sets at nought parental authority and responsibility, and coerces the parent either to violate his deliberate, cherished, and conscientious convictions, and even his religious scruples, or boldly to defy an unjust and tyrannous law.

This measure fails to satisfy even that body to whose prejudices it panders, whose selfish interests it subserves, and to whom its tyrannical clauses are especially grateful, and it is to undergo revision this session, not for the sake of consulting the interests and feelings of the subject, but with a view still further to gratify the prejudices, avarice, and vain-glory of grasping and usurping men. Nevertheless, this revision affords a favourable opportunity for the wronged, despised, and insulted laity to insist upon the repeal of the compulsory clauses. Last session the cabmen won the repeal of obnoxious enactments; are the friends of medical liberty less united, less numerous, or less influential?

The pith of the Vaccination Act is in the 2nd and 9th clauses, which enact that the parent or guardian of every child born in England after the 1st of August, 1853, shall cause it to be vaccinated within a specified time after birth, unless vaccination be postponed under a medical certificate, or series of certificates, of unfitness, and that a pecuniary penalty shall be inflicted for non-compliance with the requirements of the Act.

Now by what pretext is it attempted to justify or excuse such an outrage upon the constitutional liberties and natural rights of the subject? And, if vaccination be a blessed boon, how does it happen that there is such opposition to, or neglect of it, that the people will not accept it without being coerced into so doing.

First let us inquire wherefore vaccination is held in abhorrence by so many. Have those who reject it no weighty reasons to justify their rejection? What objections can they oppose to it? They do not believe that it affords an efficient and assured protection against the invasion of small-pox; they have a natural disgust to the idea of transferring to the veins of their children a loathsome virus derived from the blood of a brute, and transmitted through they know not how many tainted and diseased human mediums; they have a dread, a conviction, that other filthy diseases, tending to embitter and shorten life, are frequently transmitted through and by the vaccine virus; they cannot bring themselves to believe that, under any circumstances, the true way to *health* and *longevity* can be to corrupt the blood and lower the vital energies by the infusion of a poison and its consequent train of morbid actions; and further, they have a conscientious conviction that voluntarily to propagate disease is to fly in the face of God, and to violate that precept which says, "Do thyself no harm."

Are such scruples and objections entitled to no respect? Should they be permitted to have no force? Are they capable

of no justification? Should the sole and contemptuous answer to them be the brute violence of a Coercion Bill? Is such the best way to disarm hostility and to ensure conviction? Who would put faith in the professions of the philanthropist who should threaten the object of his haughty beneficence with fine or imprisonment, if he should not humbly accept the proffered boon? Or who could receive with cordiality and respect the Doctor of Physic who should burglariously thunder at the door, armed with scab and lancet, feloniously threatening to assault the inmates therewith, and, no matter how loudly he should protest that he was bent upon a mission of mercy, who could avoid suspecting that his real objects were power and gain?

Let us inquire further. Let us ask if, before attempting to coerce, suitable, or indeed any, efforts were made to enlighten the people as to the benefits presumed to be derivable from vaccination. What have the authorities or the profession done towards this object? Have lectures been delivered, have tracts been distributed, missionary visits been made from house to house? Nothing of the sort. It is only by the perusal of works too rare and costly for the mass of the people to have access to, that any information, however imperfect, upon the subject, can be obtained. The Profession, keenly sensible how much the success of the craft, and the social position of its members, are favoured by mystery and concealment, have ever been notoriously opposed to any attempt to popularise medical science; and it would seem our rulers deem it easier to coerce than to convince. How long shall coercion be preferred to education? Whilst sectaries are contending as to how the people should be educated, like doctors disputing by the side of a starveling as to which he needs, food or physic, thousands are falling victims to mental inanition.

Enlightened men! you who complain of the ignorance of the masses, and yet combine to keep them ignorant, reflect,

is it just to visit them with coercion? If vaccination be indeed a blessing which you must needs shower upon the land, would it not better become a wise government and a free people to commend opinions by disseminating information upon the subject, than to make unconverted converts by force?

But can knowledge be conveyed to the mind of the learner, unless it have an existence in the mind of the master? What reasons, then, can the advocates of vaccination assign for the faith they hold? Question them, and you will soon find that scarcely one, if one, of them has ever considered, or even thought of considering, the subject in all its bearings; they have never investigated it scientifically—that would be too great an intellectual fatigue, and to what purpose, while there is an accommodating Legislature ready, without questioning, to register their behests. Can the advocates of vaccination plead even the unanimity of the profession on their side? No. “In the public mind extensively,” says the *Lancet* of May 21, 1853, “and, to a more limited extent, in the profession itself, doubts are known to exist as to the *efficacy* and *eligibility* of vaccination. The failures of the operation have been *numerous* and *discouraging*.”

Vaccination then, by the confession of the vaccinators themselves, is not an unfailing protection against small-pox. Possibly the reader’s own experience will testify to the same effect; if not, and that he should desire corroborative proof, he will find ample testimony in the *Returns of the Registrar-General*.* Let us extract a few examples. In No. 10, vol. xv., for the week ending March 11, 1854, we find, “A

* I cannot allow myself to make use of any portion of the information to be extracted from these important and able papers, without at the same time respectfully and thankfully acknowledging my many obligations both to the Registrar-General and to Mr. Thomas Mann, for the courtesy and kindness with which, on various occasions, they have complied with my requests.

grocer died in South Street, Chelsea, at the age of fifty years, 'of confluent small-pox (fourteen days).' He had been vaccinated when one year old." In No. 45, vol. xiii., we read:—"In the sub-district of Haggerstone West, at 46, Essex Street, on 1st of November, the daughter of a bricklayer, aged five years, died of '*variola confluens* (nine days), *vaccinated with effect when six months old, marks perfect.*' Mr. Bowring mentions that 'four out of a family of seven have been attacked, and the survivors are still suffering under the disease. *All were vaccinated between the ages of four and six months; the cicatrices still perfect.*' He also records a death from small-pox without vaccination, and adds 'a prejudice against vaccination, of which this is another instance, is gaining ground in my district.'" Here, it would appear that, by a prejudice, Mr. Bowring must mean an unfavourable opinion founded on experience. To proceed:—in No. 41, vol. xiii., we find, "At 82, Earl Street, Lisson Grove, the daughter of a bottle-merchant, aged one year, died from 'confluent small-pox (fourteen days), *vaccinated seven days previously.*' The medical certificate adds, 'vaccinated on the 23rd of September, in two points on each arm. Small-pox first showed on the skin on the 30th. *Both diseases progressed in a modified form for five days, when the child fell into a typhoid state.*'" In this case, small-pox and cow-pox *have possession together*. Which of them killed the patient? The Number for the week ending March 25, 1854, furnishes another instance of the failure of vaccination to protect. "On the 17th of March the son of an ostler died, aged six years, small-pox (five days), vaccinated." The Weekly Return, No. 14, vol. xv., for the week ending Saturday, April 8, 1854, furnishes similar evidence.—

"Six deaths occurred from small-pox: three of these, of which the following are the particulars, in the Small-pox Hospital:—

"On 31st March, a boy, aged ten years, from Holborn Union, 'small-pox confluent (twelve days) unprotected.'

“On 1st April, a boy from Somers'-town, aged five years, small-pox confluent, modified (nine days). He had been vaccinated at the age of four months; one cicatrix.

“On 7th April, the wife of a labourer, from Lambeth, aged twenty-two years, ‘small-pox confluent, unmodified (eight days).’ Vaccinated in infancy in Suffolk; two good cicatrices.”

Again; in the Quarterly Return, No. 20, 1853, at page 42, we find, “Chorlton, Hulme.—The mortality of last quarter has been heavy: twenty-two deaths have occurred from scarlatina, sixteen from whooping-cough, and seven from small-pox; *five members of one family suffered from the last disease most severely*, the father and four children. *They had all* been previously vaccinated, and, as reported, with success. *Two died*, and a boy, who had not only been vaccinated, but previously had the small-pox (and was very much disfigured), was one of the victims. This manifests a very strong predisposition in some families for certain diseases.”

Once more:—on looking through the Quarterly Returns, Nos. 17, 18, 19, and 20, for 1853, the only Quarterly Returns of which I have been able to obtain copies, there appears, under the head of Taunton, in No. 17, the following:—

“There has been *one death from small-pox*, that of a male, twenty years of age, *vaccinated in childhood*.” In No. 19, it is stated under the same head—“Taunton. Autumnal diarrhœa has been prevalent, but not of a severe character. *In other respects the district has been free from disease*.”

Taunton is not specially mentioned in the two remaining numbers. In connection with the apparent small mortality from small-pox, and the generally very healthy state of the place, the following extract from the *Lancet* of July 2, 1853, is particularly deserving of notice:—

“At Taunton, Mr. White reports that vaccination has become almost extinct, and that *in a population of between*

4000 and 5000, not one case has offered for vaccination in the last two and a half years."

Many similar extracts might be made, but, enough; should the reader desire further evidence he can consult the returns for himself. However, I cannot refrain from adding, on the authority of the *Lancet*, Feb. 12, 1853, that, out of 800 patients admitted into the Small-pox Hospital in 1852, *only 230 were unvaccinated*, in other words, 570, or considerably more than two-thirds of the whole, had been vaccinated. A fact which, even by itself, strongly impugns the claims put forward on behalf of vaccination, but which seems scarcely less than conclusive when coupled with the following statement, also taken from the same journal, July 2, 1853:—

"In the City of London Union, in which, in the year 1851," (that is in the year *preceding* the one in which the 570 vaccinated patients were admitted into the Small-pox Hospital), "the births are returned 1,311, only 61—*i. e.* about a twentieth of the whole number—were protected during the first year by the lancet of the Union surgeon. In St. James's, Westminster, only 38 out of 973 births, and in St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, consisting chiefly of poor persons, only 817 out of 3,589."

Indeed, so numerous and notorious are the failures of vaccination to afford protection from the invasion and ravages of small-pox, that the *Lancet* is forced to account for them by pleading that a supply of effective lymph has never been provided; that the extension of vaccination has hitherto been entrusted to parsimonious Boards of Guardians, who, not only accepted the lowest tender, but were displeased if called upon to pay for many operations; and that vaccination has never formed part of the education of medical men, but that each practitioner is left to pick up his knowledge and experience thereof how, when, and where he can. In one place the *Lancet* asserts that "the best mode of vaccination is still undetermined;" and, in another, it complains

of "a want of agreement in the profession as to the essentially pathognomonic signs of genuine vaccine inoculation." Be these excuses, or accusations, worth what they may, do they not fully justify the spreading disbelief in the efficacy of vaccination; and do they not prove, that if legislation be at all called for in the matter, it should be directed not to coercing the laity and to pandering to the pride, prejudice, ignorance, and laziness of medical men, but to removing the causes which are said to impede the extension and to vitiate the practice of vaccination; to withdrawing the administration of measures for the spread of vaccination from unwilling and incompetent, and intrusting them to competent and willing hands, instead of leaving untouched the evil complained of; to providing the needful supply of effective lymph, and to enacting that medical men be properly instructed in its use? Things, all of which are still unprovided for, excepting so far as coercing the laity be deemed equivalent to enduing the unskilled practitioner with skill, or the conferring irresponsible power upon ill-informed men of science, be held likely to operate as a stimulus to the acquisition of knowledge. Would there not be more propriety in instructing medical men than in complaining of and punishing the presumed ignorance of laymen; and is it likely that the hostility of the latter will become less resolute, because to their natural distrust is now added the equally natural indignation awakened by the insulting disregard of their feelings and opinions, evinced in the employment of coercion? If we must have penal legislation, justice requires, at least, that its pains and penalties should be directed and enforced against the real culprit, against him who brings vaccination into contempt by practising it without knowledge or experience, and by using lymph which has no efficacy.

But, possibly, another reason, besides those assigned in the *Lancet*, might be suggested to account for the failures of vaccination as a protection against small-pox. Let the reader

look for it in the following extract from a pamphlet entitled the *Destructive Art of Healing*, by Dr. Samuel Dickson :—

“ Very different have been the reasons given by Professor Alison of Edinburgh, for his adoption of a new course. With Dr. Copland, Dr. Watson, and other English physicians of mark ; Professor Alison ascribes his change of practice to a change in the type of disease. According to these gentlemen, human nature has completely altered within the memory of the present generation ; nay, within the last ten or twelve summers it is not what it was ;—why or wherefore, no two of these three great doctors can agree. By one very distinguished physician we are called to believe, that the ‘ malaria from wood pavement has caused all diseases to assume an intermittent type.’ Another will have it that the gradual substitution of ‘ tea and potatoes,’ for ale and animal food in the diet of the people, has very considerably mitigated the ferocity of all complaints. Indeed, certain gentlemen, with the eminent Dr. Alison at their head, assure us that the diseases even of horses, asses, and horned cattle, have also, within the present century, been materially changed. By ‘ tea and potatoes ?’ No ; but ‘ somehow or other.’ Many doctors, nevertheless, declare with Dr. Watson, that the human constitution has been certainly altered, since the cholera came to England in 1832. According to these last, the cholera has not only altered the constitutions of those it attacked, but it has, ‘ somehow or other,’ completely changed the constitutions of those it never attacked at all.” [Just I presume, as vaccination protects those who have never been vaccinated.—J. G.] “ But whatever be the true theory of the cause of this change of type, nothing is more certain than that the people of these degenerate times cannot bear depletion as they formerly did ; for that fever, *small-pox*, chick-pox, and the like, are no longer the inflammatory diseases they used to be. Even epilepsy, palsy, and apoplexy—according to certain gentlemen—can no longer be treated ‘ antiphlogistically.’ So changed, in a word, has become the type of all diseases, the most sanguinary surgeons—Mr. Guthrie, perhaps excepted—can by no possibility adopt the lowering measures they adopted within the last dozen years in cases of accident—broken heads and bones, for example—not in these islands only, but all throughout the civilised world.”

If all this be so, is the experience of Jenner, and of the

first forty years of this century, of the slightest worth in determining the present value of vaccination? If, indeed, the human constitution, type of disease, and action of remedies be thus all changed within a few years, have vaccination and small-pox alone escaped the common fate? Nay, the question irresistibly obtrudes itself, has vaccination had as much to do with the deterioration of the human constitution as “malaria from wood pavement,” “tea and potatoes,” and “cholera?” Certainly one would expect its influence to be more widely diffused than some, and more permanent than others, of these causes.

But it is not enough to investigate how far vaccination operates as a protection from small-pox. That would be to take a one-sided, very partial, and limited view of the subject. There are other points to be considered before pronouncing a positive opinion for, or against, vaccination. The real, the main question, for the consideration of science and of humanity caring for itself, is not, is vaccination a protection against one particular form of disease, but, what is its influence generally upon the constitution—does it, or does it not, militate against health and longevity? Does it lower the vital resistance and predispose the system to receive, or does it actually introduce into it other forms of disease? In some cases does it even predispose the system to succumb to the invasion of small-pox itself? How else shall we explain those facts of which the following is an example?—

“At 1, Adam’s row, Lambeth, on 2nd April, the son of a smith, aged one year, died of ‘variola confluens (ten days).’ The child had been twice vaccinated but without effect.” (Reg. Gen. Weekly Return, No. 14, vol. xv., week ending April 8, 1854).

What is the percentage amongst the vaccinated, and what is the percentage amongst the unvaccinated, of deaths, before a given age, from *all* epidemics combined? What is the percentage amongst the vaccinated, and what is the

percentage amongst the unvaccinated, of cases of disease of the respiratory organs, of skin-diseases, of serofula, and of convulsions. What is the average duration of life amongst the vaccinated and amongst the unvaccinated? Of a thousand children vaccinated within a given time after birth, and of a thousand unvaccinated, the whole two thousand being placed as nearly as possible in like circumstances, what percentage in each thousand attain the age of puberty? These are questions which, not only have not received solution, but which have not even obtained due consideration. These are statistics with which the advocates of vaccination, whether professional or unprofessional, have never fairly grappled, and which most of them have not even thought of investigating. Is it not, then, *rather premature* to decide that vaccination is an unmixed good—a boon, which we ought not only gratefully to accept, but which we should even combine to force upon the acceptance of others? If it should appear that, before a given age, the ratio of mortality, *from all causes*, be the same amongst a thousand vaccinated and a thousand unvaccinated children, of what avail is vaccination? Of what import is it, as a public question, in what shape death claims his allotted number of victims, whether by small-pox, scarlet fever, or hooping-cough? If the ratio of mortality should prove to be greater amongst the vaccinated than amongst the unvaccinated, should it not suggest some grave suspicions that vaccination is a curse and not a blessing? Is, then, vaccination ever attended with risk, is it ever injurious, is it ever fatal to the recipient?

In the Registrar-General's Weekly Returns, No. 30, vol. xiv., for the week ending Saturday, July 23, 1853—a few days before the passing of the *Compulsory Vaccination Bill*—we read:—"In Bethnal Green, at 19, Warner Place South, on 15th July, the son of a cabinet-maker, aged seven months, died of *vaccination erysipelas*."

Again, in the "Weekly Return," No. 13, vol. xv., for the

week ending Saturday, April 1, 1854, we find :—" In Mile-end Town, Lower, the daughter of a gentleman, aged three months, died of 'erysipelas.' The medical man states that it supervened on vaccination." In the Weekly Return, No. 14, vol. xv., from which I have already quoted at pages 11 and 16, it is stated that—

" At the German Hospital, Dalston, both on 30th March, the son of a mariner, aged ten weeks, and the son of a sugar-baker, aged thirteen weeks, died of ' general erysipelas after vaccination, effusion on the brain.' The medical attendant adds, in his certificate, that ' both these children were vaccinated on the same day in Whitechapel Road, and were in the hospital two days.' The cases appear to be such as demand investigation. In Rateliff, at 2, Devonport Street, on 6th April, the son of a coal-merchant, aged three months, died of 'erysipelas all over the body (one day), succeeding vaccination, which was considered to be fine.' " *

" Demand investigation," indeed ! Does not the whole question of vaccination, " demand investigation ? "

Who shall write the epitaph of these murdered innocents ? martyred by Act of Parliament—sacrificed by a medical " Priesthood," † on the Altar of Science, at the instigation of a cruel and cowardly faction, vainly seeking to propitiate the Demon of Pestilence, on behalf of a people calling itself Christian, in the vague hope of obtaining exemption from " a future, probably a distant, and certainly a fortuitous evil." ‡

An American medical author, Dr. Shew, commenting on another case of death from vaccination, which was reported in the *New York Journal, Medical and Surgical*, gives a

* The Registrar-General's Weekly Return, No. 15, vol. xv., for the week ending April 15, 1854, received while these pages are passing through the press, records another death from vaccination.

† *Lancet*. See p. 44.

‡ *Ibid*. See p. 32.

case of a lady whose health had been injured by vaccination, and adds :—

“In two other cases, large swellings took place; one in the arm-pit, the other in the neck, lasting for some days, and finally breaking out in running sores. By questioning closely, *we not unfrequently find that children never enjoy good health after vaccination, however firm it might have been before.*”

In another place, the same author says :—

“After all the recommendation that this practice has had for the last fifty years, there are yet those who entertain honest doubts as to whether it is, after all, on the whole, a benefit to the race. At any rate, the question, like all others, has two sides; both of which demand our most honest consideration. It is certainly true that vaccination does not merit the encomiums which its more early advocates put upon it; nor is it anything like capable of exterminating small-pox from the world, as was formerly maintained; but that it will, in a large proportion of cases, protect the system from variola, and that in those cases where it fails of this protection, it renders the disease a much milder one, no one will pretend to deny. *The only question is, whether, as a whole, it is of benefit to mankind.* It is maintained that vaccination, while it affords a good degree of protection from variola, yet renders the system more liable to other diseases. It is affirmed also, that other diseases are introduced into the system at the same time with the cow-pox. Long continued, and troublesome skin-diseases appear to follow it, and in not a few cases, the child seems never to enjoy good health after it has been performed. I think any one who has any considerable practice among children in any great city, will be struck with the number of cases he will find of this kind, by questioning parents on the subject. . . . *Not only does vaccination cause subsequent unfavourable effects, but it sometimes endangers life at the time; and, in some instances, destroys the child. I have myself known most fearful convulsions to be brought on by it, and that in children apparently of the firmest health.*”

Again he says :—

“I have been for years so much a disbeliever in vaccination, that I would not be willing to have it practised upon a child of my own. I did not, however, know that there was high authority, even among the profession, for doubting the utility of the practice,

till the winter of 1850-1851. At this time, Professor Bartlett, a very candid and able man, and lecturer at that time on the theory and practice of medicine in the University of New York, quoted, in his remarks on the causes of pulmonary consumption, on the authority of two French writers, Barthez and Rilliett, the following facts in regard to vaccination. In 208 children that had been vaccinated, 138 died of tubercular consumption, and 70 of other maladies. In 95 that were not vaccinated, 30 only died of tubercular consumption, and 65 of other diseases. The circumstances connected with the two classes, the vaccinated and the unvaccinated, were as nearly as could be the same. Professor Bartlett did not himself, in consideration of these facts, venture an opinion as to the propriety or non-propriety of vaccination, but would simply be understood as referring to them as matters worthy of serious consideration."

The deduction from the facts stated by Drs. Barthez and Rilliett, according to the rules of common arithmetic, is that, in the 208 children, the *mortality from tubercular consumption was increased four-fold by vaccination*. Surely this single fact, were there no other, should of itself arrest the anxious attention of every man of heart and conscience, and constrain our legislators to pause and inquire. But the appeal seems irresistible, when supported by the additional fact, that *this same dire foe* of the human race, within the past ten years, has slain its 68,204 victims in the metropolis alone.

On the whole, Dr. Shew himself seems to regard vaccination as a game of chance for life or death, with the chances against the former. Can such gambling be justified by any considerations whatever; and is it not absolutely diabolical to compel any one to be an unwilling player at such a hazardous game?

Another American medical author, Dr. Trall, also appears to regard vaccination as a game of chance. He says:—

"Physicians are not at all agreed as to the propriety of resorting to vaccination, as a protection from small-pox. . . . There is no question that it is, to a great extent, a protection from the virulence and danger of the natural small-pox; at the same time

there is danger of inoculating the patient with some loathsome, and even worse disease as —, or scrofula, from the impossibility of always getting a supply of matter from healthy constitutions. In either way there is a risk to incur, and it is a delicate matter for a physician to advise on a subject when both sides are hazardous. I am fully convinced, that, if people could bring up their children in strict physiological habits, the non-vaccinating plan would be altogether the best; but in a city this seems next to impossible, and in the country it is pretty generally neglected. Children reared healthily in relation to food, exercise, and ventilation, have little to fear from any disease, however contagious; they may have this (small-pox), but it will not endanger life, nor produce much deformity nor serious injury. I have seen, within the last year, a most horridly loathsome case of scrofulous disease, in which the patient *literally rotted alive* at the age of fifteen, from *unhealthy virus* received, when he was but three years of age. Parents often find some of their children tainted with morbid humours, unlike any other member of the family, and which they are wholly unable to account for, except on the supposition of foul matter taken into the system by vaccination. My own practice would be to keep children as healthy as possible, and if the small-pox happen alone, let it have its natural course. Those who have the means to do the same, I would advise to act accordingly, those who live, move, eat and drink after the ordinary manner, would have a better chance at times by resorting to vaccination."

Dr. Schiefferdecker, also an American author, is more decided in his opinions. He says:—

"Vaccination was, undoubtedly, an excellent expedient against the awful and merciless ravages of this disease (small-pox), but it is now, after Priessnitz's discovery of the use of cold water in curing disease, not only unnecessary, but even a great wrong, because it is insufficient as a preventive means, and a cause of many diseases which would have been avoided, if vaccination had not taken place, as the hidden disease of one individual is often transferred by vaccination to the vaccinated one. The truth of this assertion is proved by daily experience; *thus I have seen a perfectly healthy young girl, born of healthy parents, soon after vaccination, infected with a skin-disease, of which the parents of the child, who seemed very healthy, and from whom the vaccine matter was taken, secretly suffered, as afterwards was ascertained.*"

Only demurring to the inaccurate prefix "cold," I cannot withhold my testimony in corroboration of Dr. Schieffer-decker's assertion of the efficacy of water in the hands of the late Vinzenz Priessnitz in the treatment of small-pox. When I was at Gräfenberg there were at one time thirteen small-pox patients, of different ages, from childhood to middle-age, under treatment by the water-cure. Some of the cases were light, some confluent and severe. *All the patients recovered*, not one of them was marked. Here, then, is a subject deserving the attention of our rulers, if, indeed, they be sincerely desirous to disarm small-pox of all its terrors.

Further, Dr. Newman, an English author favourable to vaccination, frankly admits:—

"It is of the utmost consequence that the child from whom the infectious matter is communicated be perfectly healthy, and have no inherent taint of constitution; for experience has taught us that the most terrible disorders have been communicated to healthy children from being vaccinated with lymph contaminated with ——. herpes, scrofula, &c., which injurious consequences might have been prevented by taking proper precaution that the matter was pure and unvitiated."

And now I would ask, when medical authors, regularly educated men, make such admissions as those quoted above, is it any wonder that amongst the laity there should be found so many to recoil with horror from the very idea of vaccination, and compassionately to regard those who adopt it as acting on a parity of reason with those Irish vermin of whom it is recorded that they—

"committed suicide,
To save themselves from slaughter."

Apart from all considerations of the liberty of the subject, should not such authoritative statements teach headlong and presumptuous legislators a little becoming caution and modesty, and cause them to hesitate as to their competency to legislate upon such momentous—nay more—such perilously

dark and ambiguous questions ; and is it not clear that, no matter under what philanthropic pretexts, to compel vaccination in the face of such statements, is to be deliberately and wantonly guilty of the most atrocious cruelty ? Nay, far short of such legislative aggression on our rights and our welfare, the inquiry naturally suggests itself—Is it even justifiable to expend any portion of the public money for the diffusion, uncompulsorily, of so questionable a boon ?

Will it be said that these statements are undeserving of attention ? They are the statements of medical men—of men much more likely to be biassed, by their professional education, in favour of vaccination than against it ; and that, I conceive, is sufficient to justify the suspicions and hostility of laymen, especially, corroborated, as these express testimonies are, by the oft-repeated injunction of medical writers to be careful to choose lymph from a *healthy* subject. But whilst the injunction confesses the danger, of what use is it as a safeguard ? What practitioner can positively assert that any given child is free from hereditary taint ? Where is concealed the seed of scrofula, consumption, insanity, or other hereditary malady, for two or more generations, finally to break forth ? What test is there to detect its presence ? Can any practitioner pretend to the knowledge of such a test ? Can the lymph be traced through some ten or twenty transmissions ? Even if it could, if we adopt the opinion of Mr. E. Wilson, that every case of skin-disease has its source in hereditary taint from the most horrible of all diseases, what lymph can be pronounced positively free of taint ? * Can, therefore, the expectation of any contingent

* The following extract forcibly illustrates the utter impossibility of deciding who does, or does not, carry within him the lurking seeds of some hereditary malady :—

“The doctrine of lineal consanguinity is sufficiently plain and obvious ; but it is, at the first view, astonishing to consider the number of lineal ancestors which every man has, within no very great number of degrees ; and so many different bloods is a man said to contain in his veins, as he hath lineal ancestors. Of those he has two in the

good justify reliance in the judgment of any man, or the risk of importing into a family one, or more, of those dread evils above mentioned? How, then, can any justification be pleaded for forcing upon others so dangerous a gift as vaccination, and, at the same time, outraging, in the most grievous manner, their best affections, natural rights, reasonable convictions, and religious scruples?

If vaccination were incapable of inflicting injury, medical men would almost unanimously reject it as "mere chip in porridge," capable of doing neither good nor harm. Moreover, there are frequent idiosyncracies of constitution which are not suspected to exist until betrayed by results. "What is one man's meat is another man's poison," is an adage as truthful as old, and we have had in the medical journals a case headed, "Poisoning from Mutton Chops."

If there be no danger in vaccination, why the provision in the *Compulsory Vaccination Act* for the delay from time to time to perform the operation, on the production of a medical certificate of unfitness, thus throwing us upon the skill of, possibly, the greatest dunderpate in the neighbourhood, but positively, according to the *Lancet*, of a man wholly without instruction, practical or theoretical, on the subject upon which the law empowers him peremptorily to decide?

Inquire of an advocate of vaccination upon what he bases his belief in its efficacy, and he will tell you that some fifty years ago small-pox was very rife, and very fatal as compared with its ravages at the present day. This seems the sum of his knowledge—at least it is all that he deigns to impart. But is it a satisfactory reply? Can it be shown that the present comparative immunity from small-pox is solely, or even first ascending degree, his own parents; he hath four in the second, the parents of his father and the parents of his mother; he hath eight in the third, the parents of his two grandfathers and two grandmothers; and by the same rule of progression, he hath an hundred and twenty-eight in the seventh; a thousand and twenty-four in the tenth; and at the twentieth degree, or the distance of twenty generations, every man hath above a million of ancestors, as common arithmetic will demonstrate."—BLACKSTONE, *Com. B. ii.*, chap. 14.

mainly, owing to vaccination? If so, what need to legislate upon the subject? Do not thousands, who have never been vaccinated, escape the disease without taking any particular care to avoid contagion? Does vaccination protect them? Can it be even said to do so indirectly, by lessening the chances of contagion, when it is borne in mind that small-pox is always in the midst of us, and that it frequently springs up spontaneously in a locality? Are there no persons insusceptible to small-pox contagion, as to the action of the vaccine virus? What protects them? Is no account to be taken of that *vis vitæ* which resists the invasion of disease? To what else but to this conservative power, is it due that so many individuals are insusceptible of the action of the vaccine virus? Cannot this power be exalted by due care, as well as depressed by repeated assaults, with sear and lancet, until the system succumbs to the vaccine virus? Would not true science rather seek to strengthen than to weaken this innate power? Can it not be strengthened by good food, pure water, fresh air, temperance, cleanliness, ventilation, exercise, regular moral habits and a cheerful well-regulated mind? Can the decrease in the ravages of small-pox be shown to have proceeded *pari passu*, with the extension of vaccination? Are there no other causes to which to attribute the lesser mortality from small-pox at the present day? Has science done nothing towards bringing in a more rational treatment than the murderous one of former days? Have sanitary regulations effected nothing towards checking *every* form of epidemic, or are they only powerless to restrain small-pox? Do diseases never become acclimated, and thus lose much of their virulence? To what is it owing that the plague does not now ravage this nation as of old—is this due to vaccination? Are not what are called epidemics, only varieties of one great Proteus of Disease? Is, or is not, in reality, the latent cause of epidemic disease emphatically one, now assuming this

form, now that form, according to accidental circumstances, and no one knows why or wherefore? Has not this *fons malorum* its mysterious ebbs and flows? have not the various forms which it assumes their occasional periods of appearance and disappearance, for which no one can account? Had not small-pox, before the time of Jenner, as well as after, its times of aggression and departure, and were they not noted by Sydenham? When the mortality from small-pox is low, are not other forms of epidemic often fatally rife? How does it happen that the epidemic destroyer invades one locality or one house, in one shape, and another locality or another house, in another shape—nay, that, on one and the same day, it enters into one and the same house, and claims different victims under various forms? Are not these different victims equally exposed to the contagion of each form of disease; or, rather, being exposed alike to the one unknown, latent cause of disease, what influences it to assume in each case a different form? Is the epidemic poison one and the same, no matter what form it may assume in each individual case? If so, what becomes of the boasted protection of vaccination, unless it protect from all epidemic diseases alike? Have other forms of epidemic in a great measure superseded plague and small-pox, and is their work of destruction now chiefly done by cholera, diarrhœa, dysentery, typhus, scarlatina, measles, and diseases of the respiratory organs? Have the varieties of this latter class of disease, especially, become more prevalent, virulent, and fatal; and why?

In the *Medical Times* of January 1st, 1854, p. 75, we find—

“Extraordinary mortality in Glasgow in 1853;—deaths, 14,312; still-born, 976;—the deaths have been as one to 20·9; the last 5 years’ average of deaths in Glasgow was only 1 to 38·4.

Under 1 year 2353

1 and under 5 years 4693

7046

or 40·23 per cent. of the whole deaths.

	1852.	1853.	
" Small-pox	584	296	decrease 288.
" Measles	241	1040	increase 799.
" Hooping-cough ...	639	908	„ 269.
" Scarlatina	481	839	„ 358.

" Among the diseases affecting the adult population the tubercular will be found, as usual, to have been the most fatal. *By consumption alone there were 2490 persons carried off. This distemper has greatly increased during the last 60 years.* In 1775, the population of Glasgow, amounted to 43,000; the deaths by phthisis were only 161, or affecting one out of every 269 of the inhabitants, whereas, in 1853, there have died of consumption one in every 158."

The great and alarming *increase* of mortality, in the above-mentioned diseases, in conjunction with the *decrease* in the mortality from small-pox, and, as regards the most fatal of them, contemporaneously with the introduction and spread of vaccination, together with the facts stated above by Dr. Shew, on the authority of Drs. Barthez and Rilliett, may fairly prompt the inquiry, how far this boasted discovery is responsible for such results, separately and combined, and suggest the apprehension that, if, on the one side, the good can be traced to it, the other side could show a fearful balance of evil against it.

But view the question of vaccination as one will—assuming that it is all that its advocates assert it to be, what can excuse the panic which ushered in the *Compulsory Vaccination Bill*, and what pretext can justify the passing it into a law? Even the *Lancet* was forced to ask what excuse there was for indecent haste, and what grounds for panic. In the quarter (ending September, 1853) in which this Bill was passed, the deaths from small-pox, in London, were only forty-two, while the deaths from measles were 226, from scarlatina 397, from hooping-cough 426, from diarrhoea 1232, from influenza 137, from typhus 585, from scrofula 124, from consumption 1745, from convulsions

463, and from all causes 12,918. Add, that small-pox is, in a great measure, wilfully kept alive amongst certain classes, by inoculation and other means. Again, then, I ask, what grounds were there for panic? When men are panic-stricken, then it is that, in their blind selfishness, they are capable of the most violent actions—of the most atrocious outrages. There is no aggression upon the liberties of a people that it has not been attempted to palliate, if not to justify, by the plea of the public good. Vain mediocrity is ever intolerant, and those whom it impels are continually meddling with their neighbours' concerns; such men are ever prompt to try to coerce where they cannot persuade, and imbeciles, who cannot think for themselves, invariably desire to reduce all others to a like state of helplessness,—the ever ready pretext, with all, being the public good. It is this spirit of intermeddling which has been the most prolific cause of evil to the human race. The public good is ever the cuckoo-note of every tyrant and tyranny in the world. At Rome, Florence, Vienna—where you will, it is the plea for any and every atrocity. It has been advanced to justify the burning of the body for the salvation of the soul; it is now advanced to justify the constrained poisoning of the body for its own health. Petty plagiarism!—paltry parody of a magnificent error!

The *Compulsory Vaccination Act* is said to be for the protection of the public. What public? Surely they who reject vaccination do not ask for this enforced protection—they want information and they are insulted with a hypocritical profession of regard and a Coercion Act. Cannot they who believe in vaccination protect themselves? Nobody seeks to hinder them—nobody presumes to dispute their right to adopt any medical practice, however questionable it may be. Why cannot they act with like forbearance to others? When will men learn to do as they would be done by? When will men exhibit a little becoming modesty as

regards their own convictions and some forbearance towards even the follies of their fellows? When will it be universally understood and acknowledged that all men have rights, to rob them of which is also to deprive them of the sense of responsibility and to paralyse the spirit of self-reliance. Surely, if freedom be more than a name, it implies the right of the free-man to reject not only that which other men may choose to regard as an evil, but even that which they may combine to urge upon him as a good. When will men cease to be selfish and to prefer self-interest to principle? How would any noble lord, or honourable gentleman like to have this or that peculiar medical practice forced upon himself? What right has he to force his favourite prophylactic upon any one else? Why should I accept his decision in a matter which chiefly concerns myself? What qualifications does he possess that I should bow to him as an authority in medical matters? What right has any individual whatever to inflict his medical creed, or practice, upon another? Could there be a greater outrage? Could there be a more dangerous precedent? Let those who combine to establish it beware—the day may come when they who now haughtily violate the sanctity of private and individual right may invoke it in vain, and bitterly bewail the legitimate consequences of their narrow, selfish, and short-sighted legislation! But why do the advocates of vaccination really seek to force their disgusting practice upon others? Let them pretend as they may that they are moved by feelings of kindness towards, and a desire to benefit, those whom they would coerce, their real motive is as patent as it is futile and selfish. Knowing that, in reality, their boasted prophylactic affords, at best, but a doubtful protection, they hope, in their timorous wisdom, by extending this same doubtful protection to others, to obtain, indirectly, for themselves, additional security by lessening the chance of contagion. But what principles of equity require that one person should be compelled to incur an immediate, or in-

deed, any risk, in order that another person may derive, perhaps, from thence a presumptive, or any, chance of an equivocal, or any, protection, from a remote and fortuitous, or any, danger? What an absurdity were it merely to offer to, not to speak of forcing upon, any one a protection which cannot protect even from one of the most prevalent and prolific causes of disease—*fear!* Who, under any circumstances, can hope entirely to banish small-pox and the risk of contagion from the world, at least, by vaccination? From whence did small-pox first spring? Is it not frequently sporadic? Writing of the small-pox epidemic of 1839, the Registrar-General thus expresses himself:—

“Will the simple principle of contagion explain the rapid propagation of the epidemic?—Not exclusively; for the disease is always contagious, and a certain number of deaths are caused by it at all seasons, and in every county of England. The facilities of intercourse, and the frequency of contact with the sick, are not greater when the disease is increasing, or at its height, than when it is stationary or declining.”

The Registrar-General draws attention to the fact, that the average weekly mortality from small-pox in the metropolis is five, and moots the question, which is left unanswered, “why do the five deaths become ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty-one, fifty-eight, eighty-eight weekly, and then progressively fall through the same measured steps?” It may not be out of place to suggest another question,—Why does the mortality at all decline, whilst there is left untouched, in the metropolis, one person who is “*unprotected*” by vaccination?

But to resume—Are there not many persons avowedly insusceptible of vaccination? * Are there not many others

* The current Annual Report (1854) of the National Vaccine Board, recently issued, records but one fact worthy of notice—namely, the entire failure, on a grand scale, at Loanda, of vaccination—“white, negro and mulatto.” having all alike, without a single exception, exhibited insusceptibility to the action of the vaccine virus—which the Board is disposed to attribute to some peculiarity in the climate.

whom, it is notorious, vaccination fails to protect? Are there not still others who are liable to repeated attacks of small-pox? Who then, I repeat, can hope to banish, entirely from the world, small-pox, and the risk of contagion therefrom, especially through the instrumentality of vaccination? Have they succeeded in banishing it from other countries by enforcing vaccination? By no means. Hear Dr. Brady's confession as regards Sweden:—

“Whether or not, the Act, as a compulsory measure, be in accordance with the spirit of the British constitution, I will not discuss; but the very able and excellent ‘Report on the state of small-pox and vaccination in England and Wales, and other countries, of the Vaccination Committee of the Epidemiological Society’ clearly shows, that, in those countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, where vaccination is compulsory, the percentage of deaths from small-pox is much higher than in those countries, such as France and Belgium, where honorary distinctions and rewards are held out to Medical men as inducements to exertion in furthering the object of vaccination; and this important fact I strenuously brought before the House, and endeavoured to point out the inference that it would be found impossible to fully carry out the provisions of this Act, however desirable general vaccination might be considered, unless the operatives were treated with some degree of courtesy, and were somewhat better remunerated than a cab-driver.”

I venture to draw a different inference to that deduced by Dr. Brady.—I venture to infer that the voluntary principle is every way the best; but then, Dr. Brady is struggling for the emolument and aggrandizement of his profession, while I am only contending for the maintenance of right and the liberty of the subject.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the religious aspect of the question. Religious liberty means something more than the establishment of what we hold to be truth; it implies even the toleranee of what we may regard, condemn, and pity, as error, and in that consists its essence. I apprehend, there-

fore, that, amongst a people who boast to be foremost in appreciating, and the most tender and consistent in respecting the rights of conscience and private judgment, it will be sufficient merely to draw attention to the fact, that many persons reject vaccination on religious grounds—as one of the local Registrars expresses it, “parents frequently refuse to have their children vaccinated, as they say they will suffer the Lord to work his will, and that vaccination is bringing sickness upon their children.”

That such objections are not confined to the lower classes, we have the admission of the *Lancet* :—

“There is one [objection] which assuredly would not yield to the Bill in question [The *Compulsory Vaccination Bill*]. We refer to the so-termed religious objections to vaccination, which we happen to know are not confined to the poor and ignorant, having met with them in quarters where very different views might have been expected. They are of two kinds. Some are of opinion that we have no right to expose ourselves to the evils and dangers resulting from vaccination, in order to prevent a future, probably a distant, and certainly a fortuitous evil. Others object on the broad ground that we should leave to Providence to determine the nature of our corporeal afflictions.”

The *Lancet* has “no sympathy with this morbid morality ;” —possibly not. We accept the evidenece, not the spirit, of the writer ; whose reverence for things saered may be on a level with his grammar and his logic. But we believe that this same “morbid morality” will not be without much sympathy, especially if it be subjected to persecution, unless, indeed, we are to assume that the almost universal profession of devotion to the principles of religious liberty in the nation is, unhappily, merely so much vile cant and gross hypocrisy.

After all, is physical force the rule of right ?—*magna est veritas* but a figure of speech ?—and the assertion that an Englishman’s home is his castle, only an empty boast, or an insulting mockery ?

Are we going backwards or forwards? In 1813, Lord Boringdon proposed to render vaccination compulsory; so soon after its discovery did the idea of coercion occur to the human mind: but, even in those days of Toryism, our rulers would not consent to violate so outrageously the liberty of the subject. Wherefore is it that liberty is less tenderly cared for now? The investigation would be curious, and might be profitable, but time, space, and occasion forbid to pursue it.

What fatuity, then, has now seized the minds of our panic-stricken rulers, to impel them to commit such an outrage upon our liberties? What nightmare, the offspring of small-pox and the medical profession, stupified the people, while their rights and liberties were being voted away? How cunningly small-pox has been held up, by our state nurses, as a bugbear to frighten grown children into obedience to their medical masters! How cunningly the thin edge of the wedge was inserted! How did it happen that, with the honourable exceptions of Sir George Strickland and Mr. Frewen, there was not to be found one individual in either house to speak one word on behalf of common sense and human rights? If the occasion were not too serious, who could refrain from exploding with laughter at beholding my Lords Lyttelton, Palmerston, and Aberdeen, in their characters and copartnership of "Medical Referees?" Could not my Lord Lyttelton indulge his chimerical dream of conformity; that torpid trance of thought, zeal, freedom, progress, of everything that is manly, high, and holy; that sublime conception of little minds; and satiate himself with congenial follies, in settling, and unsettling, Canterbury settlements, without adding to his renown by abortive legislation? How soon will he complete the parallel by turning upon his new toy and pulling it, too, in pieces? Who will "protect" his Lordship from himself? Could not my Lord Palmerston find one spot beyond our shores upon which to exercise his meddlesome propensities? Pity that he was

not unmuzzled at the Russian Bear! Could not my Lord Aberdeen discover any foreign potentate towards whom to exhibit his courtly grace in "booing?"

Who were the abettors and accomplices, active and passive, of these noble lords? Could not Sir John Pakington discover any more attractive native product than cow-pox, in whose favour to gratify his inordinate passion for protection? What was the religious Sir Robert Inglis about? Was he too absorbed in proclaiming the intentions of Providence, and in betraying how little actual faith he has in the power of Omnipotence, by taking the Almighty under his protection, and boldly blocking the door-way to exclude the Jews from Parliament and their rights? What was Mr. Joseph Hume—that oracle on army estimates, who can speak and vote black and white in one and the same hour—what was he doing? Was even that distinguished orator, Colonel Sibthorp, dumb? Further, what were the Right Reverend Fathers, the Bishops, about? Could they not find one word, and time to say it, in recommendation of a reliance upon Providence? Were they too busy in preparing to render an account of their stewardships? Alas! it was no party question. Still further, what were Messrs. Cobden and Co., the champions, *par excellence*, of freedom—what were they doing? Why did not they stand up for the liberty of the subject? Ah! did the leaven of Socialism, discernible in the measure, reconcile them to its tyranny? But could they not perceive another element therein which might be turned against themselves upon another occasion? Are men who are held incompetent to be trusted with the care of their own persons, or of those of their children—are such men competent to be trusted with a share in the government of the body politic and of the complicated affairs of a mighty empire? Finally, what were the "Doves" about? Were they too much occupied inviting the Czar to assail us, to be at liberty to coo out one of their *mild* remonstrances

against this atrocious physical-force science, and one of their gentle persuasives to moral suasion?

Once begun, where is such legislation to end? Is every presumed good thing in medical practice to be forced upon us? If one thing, why not another? Are we to be leeches, bled, blistered, burned, douched, frozen, pilled, potentiated, lotioned, salivated, not only *secundum artem*, but by Act of Parliament? The glorious uncertainty of law wedded to the inglorious uncertainty of physics! What an union! Shall we be compelled to adopt that famous scientific remedy for enlargement of the heart—which cures the disease and kills the patient? or the wonderful remedies of any eminent specialist,—that is, when the learned gentleman shall have finally made up his mind what those shall be? It has been gravely proposed to inoculate with scarlatina as a protection from this disease; and also with the virus of the most loathsome of all diseases as a protection likewise from it; shall we have forced upon us these blessings too by Act of Parliament? Imagine Parliament the arena for discussing the merits of the conflicting doctrines and practices of the medical schools and sects! If you would have some idea of the scenes likely to ensue, attend any one of the great gatherings of the medical profession. But are our legislators the best authorities to decide upon points of medical practice? How have they become qualified, if, as the Vaccination Act must presume, laymen generally be incompetent? Will medical men admit that any assemblage of laymen is competent to decide a medical question? Not they! What, then, is Parliament merely to register the edicts of the medical profession—that is, whenever the gentlemen of that profession can manage to arrive at an agreement amongst themselves? What a position that would be for the Parliament of Great Britain to occupy! If governed thus, what decision would it have come to upon this very question of vaccination when Jenner first propounded his discovery?

But does no pretext present itself for regulating even the diet of the people by law? Can no precedent be quoted for such interference on the part of our rulers? Is not regimen even more essential than physic? If a *Compulsory Vaccination Act*, be good, is not a *Maine Law* better? Is it possible to stop at a *Maine Law*? Do not thousands believe that a doctor, after five minutes' acquaintance with a man is a much better judge of what diet is good for him, than the man himself can be after some forty or fifty years' acquaintance with his own constitution? If it be right to enforce any medical practice upon the person of the subject, is it not more right to regulate all similar matters by Act of Parliament—to protect, compulsorily, the subject, not only from one, but from all the causes of disease—and not only from those, but from all the ills of life—to restrain him from injuring his health, or his estate, by gluttony, intemperance, or extravagance? But what, then, becomes of our cherished rights and boasted individuality, to which are ascribed our national character and greatness? Are we about to retrograde five centuries at one step, to the intolerable tyranny of the sumptuary laws? Since their repeal, this is the first attempt to reduce thinking adults to a state of tutelage, and to punish, not for the commission of crime, but for the omission of an imaginary obligation. It is a new phase of the old system of coercion, which may well cause us to look gravely on the past, and anxiously to the future. What secret tendencies are urging us on? Has the re-actionary spirit reached our shores? Is the dread demon of Socialism more active amongst us than we believed? Do extremes meet and combine? In these days it is especially hazardous to legislate in a different spirit for the upper and middle and the lower classes. Amongst the latter there are many apt to observe, quick to draw conclusions, tenacious to remember, and ready to requite. Power is rapidly passing into their hands; and, right or wrong, there are those amongst them who think that while their wives

and daughters can scarcely afford printed cottons, the wives and daughters of others should be restrained from flaunting in silks and satins: they burn for the day when everything shall be in common—when every one shall fare alike and work alike; when the commonweal shall be the sole law, and the personal rights and liberties of individuals shall be entirely ignored. And, with the precedent of the *Compulsory Vaccination Act*, what objection can be urged? Can it be denied that the state would gain in health, wealth, strength, and morals? May not, then, the Socialists indeed take heart, when my Lords Lyttelton, Palmerston, and Aberdeen show them the way?

Surely a wise and magnanimous government would perceive that there may be even greater evils in a country than the occasional outbreak of an epidemic. The systematic violation of human rights and natural affections—the uprooting, from the human breast, of feelings of self-reliance and responsibility—a state-religion in physic—coercion, which may well be regarded as odious persecution—the poor believing that what they hold dearest is sacrificed to the selfish prejudices of the rich—any one of these is far worse than a pestilence. To do violence to conscientious convictions is ever, sooner or later, productive of disaster. It is unwise to treat the masses as if they were children. It is perilous to legislate too much for a people—over-legislation is the chief curse of despotic countries, and such it threatens to become in free countries too. While men really suffer under oppression, and before they become enervated by self-indulgence and luxury, so long does the genuine love of liberty glow purely in their breasts; but when they have obtained all that they can reasonably desire, and have no more any grievance of which to complain, then, with the natural petulance of prosperity, and the restlessness and fondness for change inherent in human nature, they begin to affright themselves with imaginary ills,

until, in the very wantonness of freedom, and frenzy of power, as an escape from the wearisome burden of thought and the toilsome cares of independence, they hasten to seek a refuge in the apathy of voluntary slavery, and to forge to themselves fetters more galling than any which their forefathers ever rent asunder.

The *Compulsory Vaccination Act* is not only an outrage upon our rights and liberties, it is more ; it is a blunder in almost every detail, and might have been composed by the authors of certain celebrated diplomatic notes of nearly the same date. It is not necessary to point out all the absurdities with which it abounds, neither does it concern me to suggest their correction ; but it may not be out of place briefly to notice a few of them. A money-bill levying, upon every child born into the world, a tax for the benefit of the medical profession, it was originated in the Upper House. Avowedly meant to protect us from the risk of contagion, it leaves us exposed to the yearly invasion of thousands of unvaccinated persons—our fellow-subjects from the sister-kingdoms, children born abroad of British parents, and foreigners from many lands—from none of whom it demands a certificate of vaccination on landing upon our shores. Dare any government enforce a demand for such a certificate, and, without it, is not the Act a farce ? Again, although medical writers teach that vaccination, to be effectual, should be repeated from time to time, the Act does not provide for re-vaccination. Dare any government propose the compulsory vaccination of adults ? Have my lords and honourable gentlemen themselves been re-vaccinated—nay, have they been vaccinated at all ? Let who will smile at this, the question is important and quite to the purpose.

On the whole, need it excite surprise that such a measure should be reported by many local registrars as a “nullity ?” Will it be easier to enforce it when the odious law of settlement is abolished ? If the avowed object were to bring all

legislation into contempt, could a measure, more ingeniously adapted to the desired end, be devised?

If it can be proved that vaccination is a blessing worthy of universal acceptance, let it be done. As a parent, I for one, shall greatly rejoice; and, doubtless, amongst those who now oppose it, will arise some of its most zealous and active advocates; but, in any event, let us have no bungling, tyrannical, un-English, and un-christian legislation. Let us leave compulsion to countries like Austria, where the number of hens a man may keep in his yard, or the number of bakers, or butchers, in a town, are alike regulated by law, and where the subject may be forcibly seized by the police, and carried off and vaccinated; or like Sweden, where prayers out of church, or out of canonical hours, are illegal; and where children are forcibly torn from their nurses' or parents' arms and triumphantly borne away to church and baptized. Compulsion does not suit England. If Jenner were living now, I believe, that he, who himself suffered persecution, would be the first to raise his voice against compulsory vaccination. Be that as it may, let us remember that we do not derive our liberties from, or hold them by, the sufferance of our rulers, and that our rights are unalienable and cannot be confiscated by any earthly power. We had ancestors, who so loved liberty, that they would not surrender it for any material interests whatever; from the moment that we begin to weigh the latter against the former, and to falter in our choice, future historians will date the commencement of the decadence of public spirit and national greatness.

The *Medical Registration* and *Reform Bills* next claim our attention. At the first glance, the *Medical Registration Bill* may wear a harmless aspect, but a little observation and reflection will suffice to show that it is pregnant with mischievous consequences. This measure proposes, that there shall be a registration of all qualified practitioners of medicine and surgery; that is to say, of such practitioners as hold

British diplomas ; and that if any individual, whose name is not admitted to the registry, shall practise, no matter with what result, as a physician, or surgeon, for gain or reward, he shall be liable to fine, or imprisonment, for every time he shall so offend. Thus, not only is it proposed to prohibit many thousand persons (as is shown by the Census Returns), from lawfully earning their bread by employing their talents in a useful calling, in this boasted land of freedom, but also to deprive the subject of his natural right, to be the conservator of his own health, and to seek its maintenance or its recovery, at whatever hands, or through whatever means, his judgment shall approve. It is attempted to inflict this great wrong, under cover of the hypocritical, but clumsy and insulting, pretext of protecting him from being the victim of quackery, while the real object is to gratify the low ambition and monopolising rapacity of a combination of traders in physic.

As a logical sequence to a registration of medical practitioners, it is further proposed, that authority shall be vested in certain irresponsible and absolute boards of well-paid officials to be created for the purpose, to strike off the registry, the name of any practitioner who shall be found guilty of any one of certain crimes and misdemeanors ; and the *Medical Reform Bill* further proposes to empower the governing bodies to strike off the name of any practitioner who "has been conducting himself in a manner calculated to bring scandal and odium on the profession." What that will be construed to mean may be gathered from the following extract from the *Lancet*, of September 27, 1853 :—

"Advertising quacks, herbalists, mesmerisers, *homœopaths*, electrobotanic physicians, *et id genus omne*, flourish as the result of ignorance on the one hand, and the imperfection of our medical laws on the other. The remedy is a Registration Bill."

Consequently, Dr. Brady sagaciously advises the profession to accept the Registration Bill, as an instalment and thus, in

his own words, "get in the thin edge of the wedge," and all else they desire must follow. There is sound logic in this advice, which all practitioners who administer any but the orthodox remedies, will do well to ponder over, for, if they but reflect a little, they can scarcely fail to perceive that, as members of the one body with those with whom they are at issue, and from whose doctrines and practices they openly dissent, they cannot have, of themselves, in corporate matters, any rights separable therefrom, or independent thereof, and that their diplomas can confer upon them no authority to practise any other system of treatment than the one taught and sanctioned by the medical corporation, from whom those documents are obtained; and that, as none can assume, as inherent in himself, a right which does not equally belong to all, the right of any one of these gentlemen to deviate from the old-established practice, can only rest upon the right of private judgment, hitherto equally the heritage of laymen; and that, consequently, if the latter be destroyed, the former no longer can have any existence. Therefore, if the practitioners of the dissenting sects of medicine, forgetting how much they owe to the independent exercise by thinking laymen, of the right of private judgment, should now, or on any other occasion, combine with its foes and turn upon the friends who have hitherto sustained them in the conflict, and without whose aid they could not have attained their present position, they will exhibit an example of folly only to be paralleled by their ingratitude.

Surely, these gentlemen cannot be illogical enough to expect that the Legislature will so stultify itself, as to establish two or three rival medical sects, whose mildest charges against each other are the commission of the vilest quackery and daily murder—and, more absurd still, will proscribe, at their request, all the other medical sects whose practitioners have neglected, or disdained, to supply themselves with certain pieces of paper. Can these gentlemen

show any reason why the liberty of the subject should be sacrificed to their ideas of professional etiquette, and why to oblige them, his choice should be limited between the practitioners of the hostile sects of homœopaths, allopaths, and hydropaths, and not extended to all alike? The allopaths are more reasonable and consistent, for they entirely repudiate all the other sects, and only demand protection for themselves.

We may, therefore, regard, with the *Lancet*, registration as the first step towards complete conformity in physic; than which, with its paralysing repression of thought and action, anything would be better; and if Heberden be right, when he says that "the practice of physic has been more improved by the casual experiments of illiterate nations, and by the rash ones of vagabond quacks, than by the reasonings of all the once celebrated professors of it, and theoretic teachers of the several schools of Europe," we need look for no further improvement in the healing art, and one day may have reason to regret the proscription of the quacks, and to suspect that they, and not those who triumphed over them, were the real men of science. For what is quackery? Not the sincere adoption, or rejection, of this or that theory; not the honest employment of these or those remedies; not the want, or the possession, of any bit of paper. Johnson defines it to be "boasting pretences, or base practices, especially in medicine." Another author, Dr. James Wilson, tells us:—

"That system is quackery, wherein the direful consequences of remedies are overlooked in the attempt at immediate and transient relief. That system is quackery, which proceeds on the principle of producing a drug disease in lieu of the accidental one. That system is quackery, wherein, as is well known, many physicians and apothecaries play into each other's hands, to the detriment of the patient's person and pocket, the one prescribing to suit the other's bill, which again regulates the calling in of the prescriber. Begotten of mystery and ignorance, quackery owns impudence, insincerity and extortion for its sponsors, and the whole family of quacks fatten in the garden of drug medication."

When allopaths and homœopaths are loud in reviling and denouncing each other, and when they extend their anathema to all other rival sects, they present a remarkable exemplification of the old adage of "two of a trade," and furnish an illustrious example of the famous warning, "no connection with any other house of the same name!"

The advocates of registration affect to desire to attain two objects manifestly incompatible, namely, protection to the public, and protection to themselves. That the former is merely a pretext and blind to assist them to attain the latter is very evident. It cannot be necessary to the protection of the believers in orthodox physic, that they who dissent from it should be deprived of their rights of private judgment and choice; and these latter may well look with suspicion upon, and indignantly reject, the spurious philanthropy which insultingly presents itself in the guise of coercion. The best protection which the public can have is to be found in the retention of those rights now in jeopardy, namely, the right of free competition, and the right of private judgment.

The declared object of the *Medical Registration Bill* is the suppression of quackery. Can this ever be accomplished except through the instrumentality of education? Is not the true remedy the instruction of human beings in the knowledge of the constitution, organic functions, and requirements in health and disease of the frames they inhabit? Can the suppression of quackery be otherwise effected, unless, indeed, by the entire suppression of the practice of physic?

At a recent medical meeting, reported in the *Lancet* of March 11, 1854, Dr. Cousins, in the generous ardour and frankness of youth, thus expressed himself:*

* In order that the reader may be fully able to appreciate the tendency of the arguments of Drs. Cousins and Lankester, it may be advisable to inform him that amongst the conspirators against his liberties are two factions—one of which warmly advocates the acceptance of an instalment of their demands as a step towards the

“He did not believe that Mr. Brady’s Bill would do away with quackery, as had been represented. A man joined his own college merely for the purpose of obtaining a diploma, and he was now a most notorious quack. He contended that registration would not do away with quackery. It would be far wiser on their parts to wait until they could direct their minds to a very high stand, and then ask Parliament to remove all the obstructions of which they now had reason to complain. Let them show Parliament that they entered the profession not as a mere trade; that they went into it, as part of a priesthood, to give health to the mind and body, as the clergyman gave health to the soul. (Cries of ‘Question.’) He asserted that they were a priesthood, and it was not right for them to go to ask for trade emoluments. Mr. Brady’s Bill put them in the position of traders, and this he took to be one of the chief objections to it. The profession would not gain by it, because the quack would take care to get a diploma, which was easily within his reach.”

Yes, Mr. Cousins is right; there are quacks within, as well as without, the profession, and, legislate as you may, quacks there ever will be, so long, at least, as human nature is what it is; and, however startling be the argument with which Dr. Cousins backs his opinion, we may accept that too, if, indeed, the offering up of bloody sacrifices be STILL the distinctive characteristic of a priesthood.

On the same occasion, Dr. Lankester also expressed his doubts of the efficacy of the Bill to put down quackery:—

“He did not believe that the Registration Bill would prevent the great mass of prescribing which went on behind the counter of the druggist; and even if they did succeed in driving out the practice of medicine from behind the counter of the druggist, they could not drive it out of the medicine-chest at home.”

Reader! consider well, I beseech you, Dr. Lankester’s opinion, and, if you do not bestir yourself now, do not complain hereafter if you should be deprived of your family me-

attainment of all—the other of which as warmly denounces as unworthy and impolitic the acceptance of less than the entire of their haughty claims.

dicine-chest, and should be punished for the possession of it. Remember, too, that there are lines of demarcation difficult to be defined, and that bandaging a cut finger, or excising a corn, is a surgical operation, as well as setting a broken limb, or removing a tumour. Do not slumber under the mistaken idea that you need not apprehend such a wholesale confiscation of your medical liberties as my warning would imply ; they who seek to enslave you are numerous, active, audacious, and unappeasable, and with the legal precedent of Compulsory Vaccination, or Medical Registration, to refer to, a powerful and impressive argument might be based upon the facts that men have died of a slight cut upon the hand, an inflamed corn, and even of the scratch of a pin. Moreover, it is an inevitable sequence to the confiscation of your right to choose your medical system and practitioner, that the equally, if not more, hazardous privilege of dispensing your own medicine to yourself, or to your family, cannot be logically maintained.

In these days of free trade, medical men alone demand protection : they assert that the members of other professions enjoy a protection withheld from them, and they bitterly complain of the wrongs they endure from the rivalry of competitors whom they are pleased to denounce as intrusive quacks. Medical men continually urge that no one can usurp the functions of the lawyer or the clergyman, and they rather imperiously demand that a like measure of protection be extended to the possessors of British medical diplomas. But the parallel they seek to establish will not hold, and the argument on which they rely is but a bundle of fallacies. Lawyers and clergymen are not protected in the sense in which the advocates of medical registration would insinuate ; and medical men already enjoy a much larger amount of protection than can be shown to be in accordance with their deserts or the public good. The privileges accorded to a lawyer do not debar any man from pleading his own cause,

preparing his own brief, drawing his own deed, making his own will, or the will of any other person, or doing any similar act for himself, or for any one else for "gain or reward;" neither do they debar him from seeking counsel in the law of whom he will, and from acting upon it, or from giving it to another for reward or gain; and, accordingly, whether wisely or not, is beside the question, men do continually consult, about legal matters, builders, house-agents, and even doctors of physic themselves. Of this we have a very recent example: in the *Times* of February 20, 1854, the Vice-Chancellor, in delivering judgment in a will case, is reported as expressing himself thus:—"As to the suggestion that the institution of this suit was due to the influence of Dr. ——— over the plaintiff, the evidence of that gentleman himself, especially on cross-examination, certainly afforded strong grounds for the probability of the suggestion." The doctor's client lost her cause, and probably the poor lady now, instead of being sensible of and lamenting her own folly, has passed into another phase of it, and is reproaching the government that allowed her so much liberty, and did not compulsorily protect her from being the victim of her own credulity, and the advice of a quack-lawyer.

In general there seems an unaccountable blindness to the influence which medical men often exercise in families, to the extraordinarily intimate relations which they frequently establish, especially with the female members thereof, and to the possible consequences of an intimacy forbidden to all others, not even excepting the members of any ecclesiastical body whatever.*

* While these pages are passing through the press, Mr. R. Phillimore, M. P., in the debate on the *Property Disposal Bill*, is reported as having thus expressed himself:—

"His objection to the bill went still further. It dealt with a particular class of cases, in which undue influence could be exercised, but it left untouched an important class which ought also to be made the subject of legislation, for the influence which medical men ex-

Again; between the medical man and the clergyman there are sundry and marked points of difference; as that, however high-church and priestly be the doctrines and practices of the latter, he does not even dream of demanding legal authority to prevent the penitent from admitting to his closet, or his bed-side, for the purpose of receiving spiritual guidance, any person, lay as well as clerical, of any religious denomination whatever. Any person who pleases may give ghostly advice, for "gain or reward," to whosoever will accept the same. The Established Church has no monopoly of the cure of souls. Dissenters assert and exercise the right to erect their own pulpits, and to choose their own pastors, and the law suffers the ministration of thousands of ministers of religion whom it *never appointed*. Put, in this respect, religion and medicine upon a parity—we desire nothing better.

It is said that the clergyman is protected in his pulpit, and that no one can ascend it without his permission; but, in the pulpit, the clergyman, if of the Established Church, is there as an officer of the State, in the performance of

exercised over their patients upon death-beds called more loudly for the interference of the House than any case which had ever been proved against a Roman Catholic priest. In proof of this he would state a case in which he had been engaged as counsel. A lady, who had a large property at her private disposal, being afflicted with a dreadful kind of disease, her husband sent for a medical gentleman, who attended her for six months, at the end of which she died, and soon afterwards her husband learnt, for the first time, that she had left the whole of her property to that medical gentleman. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, before whom the case was argued, expressed their regret that, as two witnesses had sworn to the lady's sanity, they could not set aside the will, although they spoke in no moderate terms of the manner in which it had been acquired."

This is a striking, and by no means solitary, instance of one species of undue influence occasionally exercised by members of the medical profession; there is one other still more culpable and injurious kind of influence sometimes employed by them, and of which examples might also be given, but I forbear.

public functions for which the State remunerates him ; and, if of another sect, he is there by right of appointment of the religious body to whom the pulpit belongs ; whereas, the medical practitioner, at the bedside, is a private trader, who has no right whatever to be there, except by the invitation of the patient, by whom he is paid for his services. When and so far as a medical man is a public officer, he too possesses all the privileges of such, and in the hospital, the workhouse and the gaol, the man-of-war, the barrack and the camp, the college and the public school, he too enjoys all that protection and those exclusive privileges which he affects to envy in the case of the barrister in his wig, and the clergyman in his gown.

With respect to the plea of that boasted expenditure of "time and money," in the acquisition of professional knowledge, which medical men advance in support of their imperious claims—as if, in the promotion of their private interests and self-advancement, they had thereby acquired a certain species of property in other men—it is so palpably audacious, preposterous and absurd, as to merit no direct reply.

Moreover, the "properly qualified" medical men, as they proudly style themselves, have a monopoly of all public medical offices, and of the right to grant medical certificates, and to give medical testimony in courts of law ; and if, with these privileges, and with all the prestige which they derive from their professional education and social position and influence, they cannot maintain their ground against all competition, it is sufficiently evident that the fault is theirs, and that they richly merit the degradation of themselves, their profession, and their system. Surely, that trade, at least, which, after centuries of state-nursing, still needs the prop of protection, cannot deserve it.

For all useful purposes there are the Medical Directories, or, if more should be needed, there are the rich medical licensing bodies, who can well afford a little expense. Let

them patriotieally unite to publish, *pro bono, vel publico, vel suo*, yearly lists of their lieentiates.

What should we think, if any other class of traders, the purveyors of food, for example, should insultingly insist that their eustomers were incompetent, and that they only, who had served their time to the trade, were qualified to judge between wholesome and unwholesome provisions; and that, therefore, influenced by a lofty philanthropy, they were about to demand of Parliament a suppression of competition, and a monopoly of supply? However such a proposition might revolt us, we could not but admit, at least, that they would have more reason upon their side than the medieal profession, inasmueh as wholesome food is rather more essential to health and well-being than any kind of physie whatever, and it would be a far greater public benefit to put down quaekish purveyors than quaekish physieians.

The records of our eriminal courts show that the present law is effieient for the punishment of "irregular praetitioners," as they are ealled, when convicted of malprae-tices; to punish them for restoring the siek to health appears to my apprehension to be neither desirable nor endurable, and the proposal to do so not only rudely shoeks every sense of justice, but must be eondemned by every principle of policy. There are few persons who are not eognizant of some instance in which health has been restored, or life preserved, through the instrumentality of the despised "quaek." I had a near relative, who, when doomed to an early and speedy death by a consultation of eminent medical gentlemen, was reprieved by the superior skill of a modern *Æseulapius*—an itinerating Irish peasant—and lived thereafter nearly forty years; and, but a short time since, a gentleman well known in the literary world, had a limb reset and a dislocation reduced by the village bone-setter, after the titled ministers of science had consulted and

essayed in vain. Had this proposed Medical Registration Bill been in force, these men—the one for saving a limb by his superior skill in surgery, the other for preserving a life by the exercise of his superior knowledge of medicine—would have been punished by the authorities, if rewarded by the grateful convalescents.

Further, with regard to the present law, it only remains to be desired that it be administered with impartiality. If, on the one hand, a death should occasionally occur in the hands of the “irregular practitioner;” on the other hand, on what a grand scale the “priests” of old physie immolate their victims! If, within half a dozen years past, half the number had fallen victims to all the forms of “irregular” practice, that have to the mal-administration of only one drug in “regular” hands, what an outcry would have been made by the organs of the profession, and how the nation would have resounded with the lamentations of a mock philanthropy! Writing of chloroform, Dr. Arnott says:—“Already, during the short time it has been employed, *more than fifty* SUDDEN deaths have been reported as occasioned by its use, to say nothing of the numerous unreported cases of this description, and of cases of death and other minor evil consequences which have happened some time after its employment.” Of these deaths two at least occurred in extracting the toe-nail. Many, no doubt, will remember the harrowing details of the case of a strong young man, who despite his screams and struggles while chloroform was being administered to him, was forcibly held down upon the table of a public lecture-room, until death put an end to his sufferings. And this is the great invention of modern science which, according to its advocates, is “only second to vaccination,” and which, in Dr. Arnott’s estimation, is merely bringing a patient “dead drunk to the operating table.” Why should only one set of quacks be licensed to slay?

I cannot quit the subject of chloroform without noticing

a curious, if not a novel, application in medical practice. Dr. Arnott says:—“The symptoms preceding a fatal result are obviously those observed either in suffocation, or in fainting. The French surgeon does not hesitate to produce artificial respiration, *bouche à bouche*, passing breath from his own mouth directly into that of his patient. The ladies (continues the doctor), amongst whom chloroform is becoming fashionable, will, no doubt, exercise their taste in the choice of this respiratory apparatus, and have a selected resuscitator in attendance, in addition to a chloroformer.”

Here it may be in place further to enlighten the reader as to how far the medical profession is really deserving of any special privileges. Let us glean a few of the testimonies of medical men themselves. We shall give the *pas* to the *Lancet*—the foremost champion of the profession of physic, and the zealous advocate of its arrogant claims. In a leading article in that journal, under the date of January 28, 1854, we find:—

“At a late assemblage the doctrine was asserted that the time was rapidly advancing when ‘empirical medicine’ would be rightly undervalued and neglected, and all would be conducted according to ‘rational systems,’ in combination with the teaching of the test-tube and microscope. At another meeting it was affirmed that (as regarded, at least, the topic under consideration) the support of such rationalism, test-tube, and microscope, was of no moment; that medicine must again become Hippocratic, and that empirical observation could never be dispensed with.”

In the same article, after enumerating various modern discoveries, it is added:—

“Where, in all these things, lies the newly-acquired help to the greater alleviation of the sick, the better treatment of the diseased, or the more frequent euthanasia of the dying? Nor will we stop here. We now ask of the rational medicine of the schools whether it be true that the treatment of ‘BRIGHT’S disease’ of the kidney has advanced one step within the last ten

years, notwithstanding the labour devoted to the minute analysis of the structure of the renal organ by the highest objectives?—whether it be true that the treatment or alleviation of gout have progressed, *pari passu*, with the advancement of chemistry, and the asserted resolution of this patrician malady into the Protean workings of lactic, uric, and other acids?—or whether it is a fact that its more plebeian relative, rheumatism, is more amenable to treatment in *our* hands than it was in the days of FORDYCE or FOTHERGILL? What answer does it give? Is scurvy, is purpura, more preventible and curable than when we were students?—is calculus less frequent, cancer more manageable, or the nature of cholera and its treatment better known since we first received this direful visitant from the Delta of the Indus? And yet within the last decade how many an eye has strained its utmost through the microscope, the contents of how many a test-tube bubbled, pages of chemical symbols been written, and diagrams of cells, corpuscles, and nucleoli drawn! Is it not, then, as we before asserted, that, so far as clinical medicine or the treatment of disease are concerned, there is a line beyond which physiology, whether vital, chemical, or mechanical and morbid anatomy, however minutely microscopic, can predicate no help? Nor is this more a truth, or more evident, now than in the days of the illustrious HALLER, who, when his own daughter brought her child to him for his advice, replied, ‘*Ma fille, il est bien malade ; faites chercher un médecin.*”

Again, in reporting the proceedings of a meeting of the *Medical Society of London*, January 21, 1854, the same journal observes:—

“The discussion which ensued, like all the discussions which have taken place on cholera at the medical societies, terminated without any fresh light being thrown upon the nature or treatment of that formidable disease. Indeed, if a layman had been present at the meeting, he might have witnessed a remarkable illustration of the manner in which ‘doctors differ,’ and surely his faith in physic would have been scarcely increased in strength. Every speaker seemed to have an opinion of his own on the subject of the nature and cause of the disease: one regarded it as a blood disease; one as a specific disease, like the exanthemata; another that it depended on atmospheric causes, &c. The treatment was no less contradictory. The drinking of water *ad libitum*,

the employment of sulphur, of calomel and opium, of sulphuric and tannic acids, of nitrate of silver, of large quantities of whey, of saline injections, of creasote, of charcoal and lime water, had each its advocates."

Again, in a leading article in the *Lancet* of February 19, 1853, we find:—

"We say it with deep regret, but we must say it, that in no assemblages for discussion do we meet with such proof of utter want of logical discipline of the mind as at our Medical Societies. The generality of speakers seem to be entirely ignorant that there are such things as precise and formal laws of thought; that the rules connected with the theory of evidence, circumstantial and direct, are severe and strict; and that there is known to be such a thing as the doctrine of 'fallacies,' with the latter's quicksands of *petitio principii* and *non causa pro causa*, &c."

One more extract from the same journal, January 28, 1854:—

"It must be borne in mind that a Medical College has lately been founded in connection with the Royal Free Hospital. All the jealousies, all the fears, all the animosities of the 'juniors' in the older schools of the metropolis were aroused at the aspect of a young and vigorous competitor. Let the candid reader, who is removed from the sphere of the hostile influences which are arrayed to crush the rising institution, reflect upon this fact, and he will scarcely fail to trace the motives which banded together the underlings of St. George's, of the Middlesex, of Bartholomew's, and of University College Hospitals."

Do the foregoing extracts describe a profession to whom laymen would wisely surrender so much of their personal liberties and rights as are involved in the power to judge and choose for themselves in medical matters? Has the reader, notwithstanding, a lurking wish to be doctor-ridden?—let him read a little further.

For ten long years, Sir A. Cooper vainly protested against the murderous practices in certain wards at Guy's

Hospital, and, during that time, “inspired by disgust, did not enter the foul wards.” Mr. Lawrence complained of the “murderous operations that were performed at Bartholomew’s Hospital.” The other day, Mr. Stokes thus expressed himself :—

“There was hardly a morning at the Meath Hospital that some *twenty* or *thirty* unfortunate creatures were not phlebotomised largely. The floor was running with blood. It was dangerous to cross the prescribing-hall, for fear of slipping. *Patients were seen wallowing in their own blood, like leeches after a salt emetic*, and these disgraceful scenes continued for many years.” . . . “Leeches were applied, and over and over again the patient died while the leeches were on his temples—died as surely as if shot through the head; and an eminent apothecary assured him that there was then hardly a week that he was not summoned to take off a large number of leeches *from the dead body.*”

Dr. Paris says :—“The file of every apothecary would furnish a volume of instances where the ingredients of the prescription were fighting together in the dark.” Dr. James Johnson says :—“I declare it to be my most conscientious opinion, that if there were not a single physician, or surgeon, or apothecary, or man-midwife, or chemist, or druggist, or drug in the world, there would be less mortality amongst mankind than there is now.”

Dr. James Johnson is not alone in his opinion, and other medical authors have asserted that, of a given number of patients treated *secundem artem*, a greater proportion die than of a like number left to nature, and nature’s efforts. And, indeed, facts are not wanting to lend support to such assertions; it may be remembered, that on various occasions, when cholera and when typhus were raging, a much larger percentage of patients recovered amongst those who were left entirely to nature than amongst those who had every aid that medical science could yield.

To proceed: Dr. Billing says, “I visited the different

schools of medicine, and the students of each hinted, if they did not assert, that the other sects killed their patients." Franks says, "Thousands are slaughtered in the quiet sick room." Reid says, "More infantile subjects are diurnally destroyed by the mortar and pestle, than, in the ancient Bethlehem, fell victims in one day to the Herodian massacre." Speaking of the plague, Dr. Madden says, "In all our cases we did as other practitioners did—we continued to bleed, and the patients continued to die." And Sir Astley Cooper declared that "the science of medicine was founded on conjecture, and improved by murder." Surely if protection be needed by any, it cannot be by the gentlemen of the medical profession, but by their victims.

Dr. Brown said that he "*wasted* more than twenty years in learning, teaching, and diligently scrutinising every part of medicine." Knighton said, "Medicine seems one of those ill-fated arts whose improvement bears no proportion to its antiquity." Gregory asserted that "medical doctrines are little better than stark-staring absurdities." Abernethy said, "there has been a great increase of medical men of late years, but, upon my life, diseases have increased in proportion." Baillie declared that he "had no faith whatever in medicine." And, not to multiply quotations too far, Dr. Dickson says, "Locke, Smollett, Goldsmith (all three physicians,) held their art in contempt;" and elsewhere, "Sir J. Mackintosh was not the only man who left it (the practice of physic) in disgust,—Crabbe, Davy, Lord Langdale, and hundreds of others, have done the same;" and again, "The ancients endeavoured to elevate physic to the dignity of a science, but failed. The moderns, with more success, have endeavoured to reduce it to the level of a trade."

Let us now inquire in what manner this profession have ever requited those practitioners, regular or irregular, who have added to the stock of medical knowledge, or improved the art of physic. They derisively styled Harvey the "eir-

culator," and persecuted him throughout life. Parè, who first tied up the arteries after amputation, was "hooted and howled down by the faculty of physic, who ridiculed the idea of hanging human life upon a thread, when boiling pitch had stood the test of centuries." The quack, Paracelsus, first employed antimony—the French Parliament passed a law making it penal to prescribe it. A poor Indian discovered the use of bark; the Jesuits introduced it into England, and it was denounced as the invention of the devil. Dr. Grœnwelt first employed cantharides internally, and no sooner did his cures begin to make a noise than he was at once committed to Newgate by warrant of the President of the College of Physicians. Lady M. Montagu's "rank, sex, beauty, and genius" did not preserve her from persecution; and Jenner was refused a licence to practice his profession in London. And, in our own days, we have seen a Priessnitz condemned to imprisonment. Thus have medical reformers ever been rewarded, while those who revile, proscribe, and persecute them, quietly seize upon their several discoveries, and often, without acknowledgement, appropriate them to their own uses.

In the same spirit do they now treat with every possible indignity—persecute, as far as they can, by exclusion from their consultations, medical societies, and even, at times, from their schools and colleges—and only want the power, not the will, entirely to crush the hydropaths and homeœopaths, those medical reformers, who, in their love of truth and zeal for humanity, have courageously and conscientiously braved so much, risked so much, and done so much towards removing the opprobrium which so long rested upon the practice of physic.

If the reader be not yet thoroughly disgusted at the extravagant pretensions of medical men, as exhibited in their recent demands—amongst which, it should not be forgotten, *is one to be directly represented in Parliament*—let him con-

sult the medical journals for himself, and let him especially mark therein the Reports of Medical Meetings; of the recent proceedings at, and connected with, the *Royal Free Hospital*, the *Royal Maternity Charity*, and other like institutions; of the recent cases of poisoning at Croydon, which were mistaken for, and treated as, typhus, and of other professional doings and misdoings; and, probably, he will not refuse to unite with me in counselling those medical Puseyites, before openly avowing their purpose to enslave the laity, to have, if not the good sense to agree amongst themselves in essentials, at least the decency and prudence to veil their disreputable contentions from public observation—to think of Peachem and Locket, and be silent! It may be proper to remind them that too close a scrutiny might suggest the inquiry, Whence did the founders of physic derive *their* diplomas?—and this might lead to the discovery that even the privileges now enjoyed unquestioned by the Medical Faculty are, after all, merely the fruits of audacious usurpation. Possibly, in contemplation of human infirmities, we may be allowed to add, that, should the learned gentlemen abstain from plotting against our rights and liberties, we might be induced to overlook an occasional outburst of professional glorification, in consideration of the modest appreciation of self, which such laudation most evidently betrays.

With respect to the suppression of indecent advertisements, it is not at all clear how this desirable object, which deservedly awakens so much virtuous, but unproductive, enthusiasm, could be affected by a *Medical Registration Bill*,—at least, it seems possible to attain it by adopting a less tortuous, sweeping, and odious proceeding than the confiscation of our medical liberties.

The public do not need a Registration Bill—what they need are free trade and free competition, freer even than they now are, in physic, and between its various practitioners. If monopoly invariably tends towards dearness, scarcity, and

deterioration, if free trade and free competition as invariably tend towards cheapness and adequate supply,—why should the trade of physic be exempt from the operation of these laws? If men are in general shrewd enough to select the best and cheapest market wherein to purchase aught that they require, why should they be held to be only incompetent where freedom of choice is chiefly to be desired? To plead, in this day, the public good in behalf of monopoly, is too stale a pretence, and as I can no more persuade myself, with Dr. Ebsworth, that the public were created for the profession, than I can arrive at the conclusion that plague and pestilence only exist for the benefit of that learned and important body, I am unable to perceive any reason whatever for conceding the monopoly they demand. Shall it be believed that science can only flourish by being fenced around with pains and penalties, from the infliction of which, even religious bigotry would now recoil? Feeble, indeed, must then be the claims of that proud daughter of Reason to the reverence of the world.

It is deeply to be deplored that, in a profession which numbers in its ranks so many men of the highest abilities and attainments, of untiring philanthropy, of unassuming self-denial—so many of the best and brightest specimens of humanity—there should likewise be found so many members, who, by their extravagant pretensions and vulgar audacity, do their utmost to disgrace the body to which they belong, and to provoke the hostility and contempt of men of thinking and independent minds. Let us earnestly hope, rather, that the *gentlemen* of the profession, sensible that persecution never yet benefited any cause in whose behalf it has been employed, and that pride does not become the sons of science—those gatherers of pebbles upon the shores of the ocean of knowledge—will hasten to exonerate themselves from even the appearance of complicity, by publicly repudiating any participation in preferring demands as

injurious to the body in whose name they are advanced, as they are insulting to the public at large. Degrading and intolerable, indeed, after all the triumphs achieved in the cause of liberty in our days, would it be to fall under the yoke of the representatives of the barber-surgeons of yesterday! Better than such a catastrophe would be even the suppression of every medical corporation and privilege. The choice of a medical, as of a ghostly creed, can be safely left only to the judgment of the individual. If it be the inevitable lot of man to suffer martyrdom in honour of science, let him at least be careful to preserve the melancholy privilege to choose his executioner. Let laymen, now, once and for all, stoutly repel and defeat each and every iniquitous attempt to rob them of their inestimable medical rights and liberties!

When my attention was arrested by the *Compulsory Vaccination Bill*, I asked—Is this a step towards the re-enactment of the sumptuary laws?—and the almost immediate reply was supplied in a succession of meetings and newspaper articles advocating the adoption in England of the *Maine Law*.

Many of the arguments directed against the *Compulsory Vaccination Act*, tell with equal force against the *Medical Registration* and *Reform Bills*, and against the *Maine Law*, but, to spare the reader the infliction of their repetition, I shall beg him to make the application of them himself.

The professed aim of the *Maine Law* is the compulsory suppression of drunkenness, with its attendant evils. But is it adequate to effect this very desirable object? Has it done so in the State of Maine? I suspect that it has not. I have been told that, in any part of that State, any quantity of intoxicating liquors may be purchased. If, indeed, temperance bears sway in the State of Maine, is it not, in reality, the cause, not the consequence, of the *Maine Law*; is it not the result, not of compulsion, but of the voluntary principle? Has the voluntary principle produced amongst ourselves no great Temperance Reformation, which the laws for the

punishment of the convicted drunkard, and also all the physical and material chastisements of the retributive natural laws have failed to effect? Are all the imposing statistics with which Temperance Societies have edified us, only so many ingenious fictions? What has become of that boasted army of reclaimed drunkards so often proudly paraded before our eyes? Are these the men now to repudiate that voluntary principle and those moral means to which they owe their own conversion and salvation from many sub-lunary ills? Are these the men to desire to coerce their less persuadable or accessible brethren, once their boon companions and fellow-sufferers? Ah! do these modern Mahometans, casting away the weapons of argument which were effectual to their own conversion, think to spread their doctrines and practices by the force of the civil sword? I do not believe that any direct law can put down drunkenness. As long as there are some who love intoxicating liquors, and others who love gain, men will get drunk despite of repressive laws. Moreover, it is worth remembering, that in lands where intoxicating liquors are plenty and cheap, there is but little drunkenness to be found.

Amongst other enactments, the *Maine Law* provides for the appointment of an "agent" in each "town or city," for the sale of "intoxicating liquors, to be used for medical and mechanical purposes, and no other." Hence, if this law were introduced into England, it would create, on the one hand, in violation of the principles of free trade, a new and most lucrative monopoly for the benefit of a few, and, on the other hand, it would open a fine field for the energies of the illicit manufacturer and smuggler; and, no doubt, many of those ingenious devices for evading the law, which, as we were recently informed by the *Times*, are commonly practised in the gold regions, would soon become familiar amongst ourselves. Shut up all the public-houses, and a man, or woman, shall only have to go to the hair-dresser for

a bottle of *eau-de-Cologne*, or to the chemist for a dose of opium, or ehloroform. Human beings are ingenious in the indulgence of their desires, and, if their tastes be depraved, compulsion may deprive them of one means of gratification, but they will speedily discover another. Indeed, the very attempt to coerce not only frequently quickens the wit, but inflames desire, a truth present to the mind of the great lexicographer and moralist when he exclaimed, over his plate of pork, that he wished he were a Jew, that to the pleasure of eating he might add the gust of sinning. Suppress entirely the manufacture of, and traffic in, intoxicating drinks, and you cannot thereby make men more moral,—you can only compel them to transfer their affections from one lurking vice to another. If you would reform and elevate the drunkard, you can only do so by educating and winning him to purer thoughts, tastes, and habits. Compulsion has ever missed its aim; you may forcibly vaccinate, as they cut off beards in Russia; you may deprive men of the physicians in whom only they confide; you may cut off the supply of intoxicating drinks; you may shut the Jews out of Parliament, and the artisans out of the Crystal Palace on the Sabbath; but you will fail by such means to make the people either healthy, scientific, moral, or religious: these are results that can only be attained by the willing consent and co-operation of the people themselves. Science, morals, and religion can never be promoted by penal legislation, and fine and imprisonment can no more succeed than fire and faggot.

The expense of enforcing a *Maine Law* in a country like this, where, probably, a moiety of the population would be actively employed in its constant violation, would be enormous, and would add grievously to our already too heavy burden of taxation. In fact, it would seem impossible to enforce such a law, except to a very limited, and, consequently, partial and unjust extent.

But that which chiefly demands reprobation in this law

is its resemblance to the other laws, which have engaged our attention, in its aggression upon the liberties of the subject, in its tendency to unteach man self-reliance and to render him still more a helpless and irrational being, and in its placing enormous additional power in the hands of *irresponsible* medical despots. But, I repeat, would it put down drunkenness? No, I again assert, not while there are some who thirst for intoxicating liquors, and others who thirst for gold—not while there are money-loving, or wine-loving, or kindhearted physicians, who will compassionately listen to the tale of sinking strength and gnawing at the stomach, will pocket the crown, or the guinea, and will write the wished-for prescription for the daily glass or bottle. The weekly licence to get cheered and elevated will have its well-understood market price—doctors will be the lawful smugglers to some—smugglers the unlawful physicians to others; and they and the licensed monopolists will agree, at least, to bless the short-sighted philanthropists to whom they shall be indebted for a golden harvest.

If spirituous liquors be useful medicines, is no supply to be kept in the family chest—at least while the family chest is spared—and, when a stimulus is required, must the patient call in and fee a physician, however passing the ailment, or endure the delay and expense of sending, perhaps, some twenty miles, however pressing the emergency, and when every second may be of vital importance? Surely this would be not only an intolerable tyranny as regards the person, but also as regards the purse, especially as respects those intelligent and self-relying persons who would not value at a pin's fee the combined, or rather discordant, opinions of all the medical authorities in the nation. If one drug is thus to be placed exclusively in the hands of doctors and smugglers, why not all drugs?

In venturing to warn my countrymen of the dangers that threaten them, I suffer myself to be allured from my peace-

ful retirement, and to risk the disruption of ties very dear to me, in the pursuit of no object but one—which should be the common aim of all—the preservation of liberties highly to be prized, and for which, I hope, I shall never hesitate to struggle, when they are threatened with extinction.

If one man is to be restrained from drinking in pleasant draughts of delirium, shall another be permitted to court apoplexy by luxurious feasting, or a third be allowed to hasten his journey to the better land by abstinence and mortification? Shall not, rather, each man, in personal matters, be quietly allowed to enjoy his tastes and endure the penalty? Ah! that beguiling dream of earthly perfection, whither would it lead us? The other day we were amused with another amiable illusion—the phantom of universal peace—while some three-fourths of the human race are still sunk in barbarism and infidelity. After what folly are we next to run? What limits are there to this impertinent intermeddling in each other's affairs? Have we not, already, too much legislation upon all subjects? In what, but pride, has this meddlesome spirit of dictation its origin? Who can believe in the philanthropy that threatens the chain and the cell? To what would it ultimately reduce the world, but to one vast lunatic asylum, in which every inmate should figure in the twofold anomalous character of keeper and patient? Should it, indeed, be the policy of the State, to repress, in any class, the habit of self-reliance and practice of foresight; to keep any portion of its citizens in ignorance, teaching them but helplessly to look up to their rulers for guidance in all things; enjoining them not only to “submit themselves,” to their “spiritual pastors and masters,” but now even—*proh pudor!*—to their medical masters likewise; thus dooming them throughout life to a state of childlike helplessness? Must not such a class eventually become a great sore in a State? abjectly slavish and petulantly riotous by turns—who can foresee all the evil to which it shall give birth?

After all, is freedom but a myth, and are all our acquisitions in its name only so many delusions; and is principle but a harlequin that skips in upon the stage in one dress, to be hissed off, and presently skips in again in another, to be applauded?

Freedom! watchword of faction; cant of the demagogue; bugbear of the tyrant! hast thou no existence save in the periods of the orator and rhymes of the poet? Hast thou not even the illusory substance of a will-o'-the-wisp, a sunlit cloud, or an aurora borealis? Where shall we seek thee? Hast thou thy asylum beneath the throne, the altar, the tribune, the star-spangled banner, or hast thou taken refuge, perchance, in a trade's union? Art thou even banished now from the shelter of the academic chair? Well! who cares for thee, but the slave? enchained, he calls wildly on thy name; unchained, the ingrate instantly betrays thy cause, and hastens to fasten his just loosed bands upon the first captive he can seize.—Liberty! no! doubt thee who may, thou art not a cheat, though few there be who know thee! Let even the orator, who declaims most warmly in thy name, analyse his thoughts, correct his grammar, speak the truth; haply he but thinks of *power*, the power to coerce somebody, something, anything, it matters not whom or what. So it has been, is, shall be, until full and perfect Christian charity shall pervade the earth.

Britons! guard well your hard-won precious rights. Surrender not even that one, which, in the immensity of your riches, may appear of but trivial value. Keep your medical liberties intact. You must preserve them all, or you must lose them all; and remember that with them must be lost, or preserved, no small portion of your civil and religious liberties as well; they are all intimately and inseparably united. Let no unhallowed tongue beguile you; let no unhallowed hand despoil you!

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